**What is Foreign Policy?**

Foreign policy is a set of strategies, principles, and decisions adopted by a country to manage its relations with other nations. It is a comprehensive approach that outlines a country's stand on various international issues, diplomatic engagements, trade agreements, and interactions with other states.

For example, Pakistan's foreign policy does not recognize Israel due to domestic considerations, reflecting the stance against a Zionist state in the Middle East. The aggressive nature of Pakistan's foreign policy towards India is shaped by domestic perceptions of India as a security threat.

The foreign policy of a country also reflects its principles and preferences in establishing relations. Pakistan, as a Muslim state, maintains friendly ties with other Muslim countries, aligning with its domestic aspirations and ideology.

Additionally, foreign policy indicates the principles guiding a country's relations. Pakistan's strong and beneficial relationship with China is based on shared principles and preferences, contributing to economic and security cooperation.

**Pakistan's foreign policy**

Pakistan's foreign policy is a crucial aspect of its existence in the contemporary world, recognizing the interdependence among nations. It is essential for achieving national interests. This policy is designed to establish and nurture relations with advanced nations, fostering cooperation in economic, industrial, and technological domains. Economic dependence on stronger nations becomes a reality, necessitating alliances for support in various sectors.

Given its developmental stage, Pakistan, as a significant third-world country, has strategically formulated its foreign policy, considering its geographical location, geopolitics, and economic needs. Pakistan needs to maintain good bilateral relationships with other countries for the sake of trade and security measures. In essence, the foreign policy of Pakistan is a dynamic tool adapted to the evolving global landscape to secure economic growth, technological advancement, and national security.

**Principles of Pakistan Foreign Policy**

Following things should be taken care while formulating the foreign policy of a country.

1. Peaceful coexistence (Live and let live)

2. Non-alignment (Be Neutral)

3. United Nations Chartered

4. Unity of Islamic world

5. International and Regional Cooperation: Member of South Asian Regional Cooperation

(SARC), Organization of Islamic countries (OIC), World health organization (WHO).

**Objectives of Pakistan’s Foreign Policy**

Pakistan’s foreign policy intends to achieve the following objectives:

• National Security

• Economic Development

• Ideology

**Determinants of Pakistan’s Foreign Policy**

The key determinants of foreign policy of Pakistan are as under:

• Security

• Ideology

• National Interests

• Diplomacy

• Public Opinion

• Decision making

**Guiding Principles of Pakistan’s Foreign Policy**

The guiding principles of Pakistan's foreign policy are deeply rooted in its history and values. These principles shape the nation's approach to international relations:

**1. Protection of Freedom and Sovereignty:** Pakistan prioritizes the preservation of its hard-earned independence and sovereignty, safeguarding against any threat to its freedom.

**2. Cordial Relations with Muslim Countries:** Pakistan actively seeks friendly ties with fellow Muslim nations, expressing solidarity on issues such as the rights of Palestinians, Kashmiris, and Afghans. It is an engaged member of the Organization of the Islamic Conference.

**3. Non-Interference in Internal Affairs:** Emphasizing the principle of national sovereignty, Pakistan refrains from meddling in the internal affairs of other nations, advocating for peaceful coexistence and respect for each country's autonomy.

**4. Implementation of U.N Charter:** Pakistan aligns its actions with the United Nations Charter, supporting its implementation. The country actively participates in global initiatives, such as those addressing human rights and sustainable development goals.

**5. Promotion of World Peace:** Pakistan advocates for peace on the international stage, rejecting aggressive designs against any nation. The country favours negotiation over conflict resolution and actively participates in mediation efforts to settle disputes. Pakistan raises its voice for oppressed countries as is the situation prevailing in Palestine and Kashmir. Pakistan is the part of many groups, like UN, in which they play their role to promote world peace.

**6. Non-Alignment:** Pakistan historically adheres to a policy of non-alignment, avoiding alignment with major power blocs. It withdrew from associations like SEATO and CENTO, maintaining a neutral stance during the Cold War.

**7. Right for Self-Determination and Condemnation of Racial Discrimination:** Pakistan strongly supports the right of self-determination and condemns racial discrimination. It has been a vocal proponent of the right to self-determination for Kashmir, actively working against colonialism.

**Analysis/Factors of Pakistan’s Foreign Policy**

The guiding principles of Pakistan's Foreign Policy are rooted in the country's Islamic ideology, its rich cultural heritage and historical experience. As an Islamic and non-aligned country, Pakistan supports Islamic values and firmly upholds the below mentioned principles, which hold out the promotion of a just and unbiased world order in which nations can live in peace and security Guiding Principles of Pakistan’s Foreign Policy are as follows:

a. Protection of freedom and sovereignty

b. Cordial Relations with Muslim Countries

c. Non-Interference in Internal Affairs of Other countries

d. Implementation of U.N. Charter

e. Promotion of World Peace

f. Support for Self-Determination and Condemnation of Racial Discrimination

**Important Factors of Foreign policy**

Important Factors of Foreign policy include internal and external factors, which are as under

**i. Internal factors included**

a. Geographical location

b. Size of the State

c. Natural capacity

**ii. External factors included**

a. Alliances

b. Power structure

c. World opinion

**Current Focusing Points of Pakistan's Foreign Policy**

Pakistan's foreign policy is strategically oriented to address key challenges and opportunities, with a focus on several crucial aspects:

**1. National Security:** Ensuring security against external and internal threats is a top priority. Pakistan strives to safeguard its national identity, territorial integrity, and independence.

**2. Relations with Muslim States:** Cultivating strong and brotherly ties with Muslim nations is a key interest. Pakistan emphasizes sovereign equality, bilateralism, mutual interests, and non-interference as cardinal features of its foreign policy.

**3. International Norms and Institutions:** Pakistan works within international norms and institutions while advocating for their restructuring to align with current global realities.

**4. Support for Developing Countries:** Identifying with the concerns of developing nations, Pakistan actively participates in international organizations. It upholds the principles outlined in the United Nations Charter and engages in UN deliberations.

**5. Right of Self-Determination:** Supporting the right of self-determination for subjugated nations, opposing colonialism, and advocating for peaceful resolution of inter-state disputes are integral aspects of Pakistan's foreign policy.

**6. Arms Control and Nuclear Non-Proliferation:** Pakistan plays a role in arms control and nuclear non-proliferation efforts. Its status as a declared nuclear power influences its stance on issues related to nuclear weapons and reactors.

**7. Peace and Stability through Cooperation:** Promoting peace and stability through international and regional cooperation is a central goal. Pakistan actively engages in regional and global initiatives to foster collaboration.

**8. Strategic Geo-Political Location:** Pakistan's strategic geo-political location, situated at the crossroads of major maritime oil supply lines and in proximity to resource-rich Central Asian countries, contributes to its international role.

**9. Key Alliances:** Pakistan is a significant member of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and a major non-NATO ally in the global fight against terrorism. Close alliances, especially with China, play a crucial role in its foreign policy.

**10. Historical Relations:** Historically, Pakistan has had challenging relations with India, particularly regarding the core issue of Kashmir. Strong ties with neighbouring countries, including Afghanistan, Iran, and China, as well as extensive relations with the United States, shape its foreign policy dynamics.

**11. Strategic Alliance with China:** China remains Pakistan's closest ally, fostering strong diplomatic, economic, and military relations. This alliance is rooted in historical ties and shared interests.

In summary, Pakistan's foreign policy is multifaceted, addressing diverse challenges while actively participating in global affairs and alliances.

**Major Alliance**

Pakistan has historically maintained brotherly and friendly relations with all the Arab and Muslim countries under the banner of OIC. Apart from friendly relations with Muslim countries, China and USA are also seen as major partners.

**Major Revelries**

Pakistan and India have fought 3 wars in the past. The continuing dispute over the status of Kashmir inflames opinion in both nations and makes friendly relations difficult. Moreover, Pakistan and Israel maintain no diplomatic relations.

**International Organization & Foreign Policy**

Pakistan's foreign policy is intricately linked with its participation in international organizations, reflecting a dynamic approach to global affairs:

**1. United Nations (UN) Membership:** Pakistan is an active member of the United Nations, engaging in diplomatic efforts and contributing to international initiatives.

**2. Military Alliances - CENTO and SEATO:** Historically, Pakistan was a member of the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO) and the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO), showcasing its commitment to military alliances.

**3. Close Alliance with the United States:** Pakistan's alliance with the United States strengthened significantly after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. This close relationship influenced its foreign policy dynamics.

**4. Regional Cooperation for Development (RCD) Pact:** In 1964, Pakistan, along with Turkey and Iran, signed the RCD Pact, driven by shared concerns about the Soviet Union's expansionist policies. This pact laid the foundation for economic cooperation among the member countries.

**5. Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO):** As RCD became obsolete after the Iranian Revolution, Pakistan played a key role in founding the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) in 1985, emphasizing economic collaboration among member states.

**6. Opposition to Indian Membership in UNSC:** Pakistan is a leading member of a group opposing Indian membership in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), reflecting its stance on regional dynamics.

**7. Evolution of Foreign Policy:** Pakistan initially pursued an independent foreign policy in 1947 but later tilted towards the West due to economic and security pressures. It embraced a non-aligned stance in the mid-60s to the late 1970s, emphasizing interactions with Muslim states and the developing world.

**8. Counterterrorism Efforts:** Pakistan actively participates in global efforts to combat religious extremism and terrorism. Acknowledging these threats to global security and its internal stability, Pakistan has implemented counterterrorism measures, making difficult decisions to ensure peace and stability in its immediate neighbourhood.

**9. Image Building and International Confidence:** Pakistan's foreign policy aims to enhance its global image as a democratically oriented, modern, and enlightened Muslim state. By countering extremism and ensuring socioeconomic stability, Pakistan seeks to restore international confidence in its governance.

**Different Phases of Pakistan’s Foreign Policy**

**1. Early Independence (1947-1955):**

- Faced with an Indian threat on the Eastern borders, Pakistan initially adopted a non-aligned and independent foreign policy.

- Limited military assistance from other Muslim countries prompted a self-reliant approach.

- In the Cold War era, Pakistani leaders sought ties with the U.S. to secure border guarantees, but these efforts were unsuccessful.

**2. Entry into Multilateral Alliances (1955-1959):**

- In 1955 and 1959, Pakistan joined multilateral alliances initiated by the USA to counter communism: SEATO (1955) and CENTO (1959).

- The agreements, promising collective defense, provided a sense of security against external threats.

- However, during conflicts with India in 1965 and 1971, the alliances proved ineffective, as no external support materialized.

**3. Post-1971 Defeat and Defense Policy Shift:**

- After the 1971 defeat and the failure of alliance support, Pakistan shifted to a defense-centric policy.

- Massive arms purchases were initiated to enhance national security, leading to increased defense expenditures.

- The development of nuclear and missile systems aimed at maintaining a regional balance of power.

**4. Pak-China Relations and Regional Dynamics:**

- To counter the power imbalance in South Asia and address unsafe borders, Pakistan strengthened relations with China.

- The Afghanistan issue, Kashmir struggle, and nuclear policy influenced the porous nature of Pakistan's borders.

**5. Contemporary Challenges (Recent Decades):**

- Ongoing conflicts in Afghanistan, the Kashmir struggle, and Pakistan's nuclear policy have posed serious challenges to border security.

- Political disturbances and wars in Afghanistan have created socio-economic issues, burdening Pakistan with foreign aid that has not effectively addressed the needs of the common people.

**6. Economic Focus and Policy Design:**

- In the face of economic challenges and a status among poor countries, Pakistan must reevaluate its foreign policy.

- Emphasis on designing a foreign policy that prioritizes economic needs, ensures a stable economy, and reduces reliance on loans and foreign aid.

- The goal is to cultivate capabilities that free the country from the unkind clutches of debt and foster sustainable economic development.

In summary, Pakistan's foreign policy has evolved through various phases, responding to regional threats, alliance dynamics, and changing global circumstances. The current focus is on economic stability and self-reliance.

**Conclusion**

The guiding principles of Pakistan's Foreign Policy are rooted in the country's Islamic ideology, its rich cultural heritage and historical experience. As an Islamic and non-aligned country, Pakistan supports Islamic causes and firmly upholds the above-mentioned principles, which hold out the promise of a just and equitable world order in which nations can live in peace and security.